



EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 9: Dreamer?

Suggested Week of Use: April 28, 2024

Core Passage: Genesis 37:5-8,18-28

News Story Summary

Earlier this month, the death of football star and actor O.J. Simpson inevitably led to reflections on what was considered “the trial of the century” in 1995. The murder of Simpson’s ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and a male acquaintance, Ron Goldman—along with the arrest and trial of Simpson for the crime—served to spark conversations on many important cultural issues, including domestic violence, the privilege of celebrity, and racial bias. Simpson ultimately was found not guilty in his criminal trial, though a later civil lawsuit found him liable for the wrongful deaths of his ex-wife and Goldman.

Then and now, some observers noted that the case also highlighted another age-old problem: jealousy. Some have compared Simpson to Shakespeare’s “Othello,” a tragic figure who killed his wife in a jealous rage. The fictional story of Othello demonstrated the dangers of jealousy running amok; and, according to some, so did the true-life story of O.J. Simpson. Those who believe he was guilty often point to the devastating consequences of jealousy when it overwhelms people’s lives.

For more about this story, search “O.J. Simpson, Othello, and jealousy.”

Engage

To supplement Engage, write “Othello” on the board. Encourage adults to share anything they know about this tragic Shakespearean character. Share details of the play’s plot for those who are not familiar. Emphasize the role of jealousy. Ask: *What true-life stories might compare to this narrative?* Read the information comparing Othello and O.J. Simpson, who died earlier this month. Lead adults to list some dangerous results of unchecked jealousy. Share that this session focuses on a biblical account of jealousy’s devastating impact on individuals and families.

Challenge

To supplement Challenge, direct the group to identify relationships, either past or present, marred by jealousy. Ask: *If you could go back and change anything in that situation, what would it be? What would you do to overcome or avoid those jealous feelings?* Discuss responses. Remind adults that while they cannot change the past, they can take practical steps to deal with jealousy in the present and future. Allow time for the group to engage in prayerful self-reflection. Encourage them to confess their weaknesses to God and to seek His strength moving forward.